



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION

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**Meeting Minutes for July 10, 2003**

**Members in Attendance:**

Karl Honkonen	Designee, EOEA
Joe Pelczarski	Designee, CZM
Marilyn Contreas	Designee, DHCD
Joe McGinn	Designee, DCR
Mike Gildesgame	Designee, DCR
Gerard Kennedy	Designee, DAR
Cynthia Giles	Designee, DEP
Mark Tisa	Designee, DFW
Bob Zimmerman	Public Member
David Rich	Public Member
Frank Veale	Public Member
Matthew Rhodes	Public Member

**Other in Attendance:**

Michele Drury	DCR/OWR
Vicki Gartland	DCR/OWR
Linda Marler	DCR/OWR
Sara Cohen	DCR/OWR
Marilyn McCrory	DCR/OWR
Paul Millett	Metcalf & Eddy, Inc.
Vandana Rao	EOEA
Melissa Cryan	EOEA
Jose Andreu	Aquaria/Inima USA
Pine duBois	Jones River Watershed Association
Betsy Shreve-Gibb	Metcalf & Eddy, Inc.
Thomas Keeffe	Tutela Engineering
Richard Baummer	Erickson Retirement Communities
Betsy Davis	US EPA
John Torgan	Save the Bay
Brian Creedon	City of Brockton

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The Mashpee Water District hosted the July meeting at their offices, and David Rich was asked to give an overview of the Mashpee Water District. In 1961, the Town of Mashpee had no public water supply. In 1962, a privately owned public water supply was developed in southern Mashpee that was 90% seasonal homes. Between 1962 and 1987, they were the only public

water supplier in Mashpee, and they serviced a small percentage of the town. About 80-85% of the town did not have access to public water supplies. In 1987, Mashpee petitioned the Commonwealth to establish the Mashpee Water District. In 1991, the Mashpee Water District purchased the private water supply company. Between 1991 and today, the District has grown to 8,000 service connections, serving 80% of the town and is still growing. About 70-75% of their new business is hooking up people to the public system who were on private wells. There is an office staff of four, a field staff of six, and the director. The District has five wells in the town and is in the permitting process for another well.

**Item #1: Executive Director's Report**

Linda Marler reported on the current water conditions. In June, there were 5.5" of rainfall statewide. Every region had above normal rainfall in June. Massachusetts is above normal for the water year by about 20%. Stream flow was above normal for most of the state in June. Groundwater levels were above normal for most of the state in June. Reservoir levels look like they should be able to deal with the lack of rainfall in the last two weeks.

Karl noted that EOEA has been involved in developing Five Year Watershed Action Plans for the 27 watersheds. The Ten Mile, Merrimack, Connecticut, Hudson, Housatonic, Ipswich, and the Shawsheen watersheds are completed and will be posted on the web site. Assessment reports for the Chicopee and Shawsheen watersheds will be posted. The North Coastal, Boston Harbor, Deerfield, Millers, Narragansett Bay, Blackstone, and Parker watersheds will be completed in this fiscal year. These plans incorporate not just water quantity and quality issues, but also habitat, recreation, education, and open space issues as well. They will be released to not just agencies, but communities and local groups.

Karl also mentioned the Globe article on the lowering groundwater levels in Boston. In certain neighborhoods, pilings that have been historically submerged below the water table are now exposed to air. This has caused deterioration of the pilings and therefore a loss of building integrity. There are efforts underway to get a handle on the situation, including installing monitoring wells in some of the hot spot areas, determining the cause of the water table decline, and convening a meeting of agencies under Office of Commonwealth Development to address what to do to solve the problem.

Marilyn McCrory, an intern, has been working on problems in the Ipswich River Basin. A presentation integrating different issues affecting the basin has been completed. Marilyn has also been looking at funding sources for projects in the basin.

**Item #2 Vote: Meeting minutes**

There are three sets of minutes. Each set of minutes will be voted on separately.

<b>V O T E</b>	September 13, 2001: Unanimously passed, with Zimmerman, Rhodes, Tisa, and Kennedy abstaining
	June 13, 2002: Unanimously passed, with Veale, Zimmerman, Tisa, and Rhodes abstaining
	August 8, 2002: Unanimously passed, with Tisa and Zimmerman abstaining

**Item #3: Presentation on the Cohasset Water Needs Forecast**

Tom Keffe, consultant for the Town of Cohasset, and Dick Baummer, with Erickson Linden Pond Development, were acknowledged. A conservation plan from the Town of Cohasset has not yet been received, but will be soon. Cohasset will be selling water to the Erickson development, which is located in southwest corner of Hingham. The development is a continuing care retirement community. It will have an on-site wastewater discharge. This water sale will trigger the Interbasin Transfer Act. Staff have been meeting with Erickson and Cohasset and expect to receive an Request for Determination of Insignificance soon.

Aquarion is the water supplier in Hingham, however, it is not able to supply Erickson's long-term needs. Cohasset's population is holding steady, with a population decline projected. Cohasset does not have an existing water management act permit. They are here specifically to ask for water for the Linden Pond Development, which will need 306,000 gallons/day starting in fall of 2004. This is over Cohasset's registration.

Baummer described the Erickson project. It can be considered more of a regional project, as the resident seniors will be drawn from a larger geographic area than just Cohasset and Hingham. It will provide affordable housing for seniors. Erickson anticipates starting the project in the fall of 2004 and expect that the project will be built over 10 years.

Zimmerman asked why we need more water if Cohasset's population is supposed to go down over the next 20 years. Drury responded that the water was specifically to serve this retirement community. It was added to the nonresidential portion of Cohasset's demand because it represents a fixed water sale.

David Rich asked if the projections were not approved whether Cohasset still have to serve them. Erickson would have to go back to other alternatives that were evaluated in the final EIR. Another option would be to talk to Aquaria.

**Item #4: Report on Public Hearing on the Staff Recommendation for the Aquaria Project**

The June 19<sup>th</sup> hearing in Fall River was not as well attended as the others. Four people gave comments:

- Mayor Yunits spoke on the City's water conservation work. He feels that Aquaria is a good option. The City completed an extensive background check on Aquaria's parent company and they have confidence that they will be able to run the project well.
- Arthur Markos from Brockton 21<sup>st</sup> Century Committee said that this is a good option and will hopefully cut down on sprawl.
- Eileen Simonson from WSCAC said she supports Aquaria, but is concerned about regulatory coordination. Communities should still practice water conservation.
- Save the Bay commented and provided articles on the project from local papers.

The Staff recommendation has changed a bit based on public input. Each criterion of the Interbasin Transfer Act has been listed. Criteria for the Aquaria portion of the project have been met.

**Item #5: Presentation on Compliance with the Environmental Criteria for the Aquaria Project**

Drury followed up on a comment made by Clayton at the last meeting concerning the efficacy of monitoring and mitigation. She cited a monitoring report furnished by DMF for a site in NY that demonstrated that use of the Gunderboom technology resulted in 80% fewer entrainment and impingement events.

Aquaria is required to meet the three environmental criteria of the Act:

1. The MEPA criterion has been met. A notice of project change will have to be submitted by any customer regardless of the amount they plan on purchasing.
5. Reasonable Instream Flow: Gartland stated that generally, IBT reviews look at the impacts to flow in the river going downstream, however, this is not at issue in this case because it is in the tidal zone and no significant change in flow height is expected. There may be a slight change in salinity, but CZM and DFW said that monitoring would identify any problems. NHESP said that Long's Bittercrest may be affected by turbidity. Vegetation monitoring, both pre- and post-project, will be required to identify any potential impacts. One year of baseline data is required. One monitoring plan is suggested for all agencies instead of separate plans for each agency.
8. Cumulative Impacts: If unforeseen impacts are discovered as a result of monitoring, Aquaria will have to change the operation of the project

Zimmerman asked what will happen if a particular level is triggered during monitoring. The response was that Aquaria would have to change the operation of the project. He asked if Aquaria's consultants had modeled the intake to reduce entrainment and impingement. They have not specifically modeled it, but assessed it throughout the project's development.

The schedule from here is to ask for a vote on the Staff Recommendation on August 14<sup>th</sup>. WRC Staff is recommending approval with the monitoring conditions. Aquaria cannot sell water until a customer has filed a Notice of Project Change through MEPA and demonstrated that it has met the applicable water supply criteria of the Act. It is expected that Brockton will file its NPC in late July. Once MEPA is completed and Staff has all the information required to evaluate the Brockton request under the Act, a public hearing will be scheduled according to the regulations. Filing the final approval with Secretary of State, which will include compliance by both Aquaria and Brockton with the applicable criteria, is expected to occur in January, if all goes according to schedule.

DuBois asked if she would be getting a reply to her April 4<sup>th</sup> letter. Honkonen replied that Aquaria's application has been accepted as complete. DuBois also noted that a problem lies in how to discuss if it is an interbasin transfer or not and what the environmental impacts are. Drury replied that the environmental impacts of the full build-out 10 mgd, have been evaluated in this analysis.

**Item #6: Low Impact Development Techniques**

Massachusetts has many challenges to overcome. The Ipswich River HSPF model shows that water supply modifications alone will not bring flow to where it should be. Another way to help achieve these levels is through Low Impact Development (LID). In LID, water is allowed to

infiltrate at each lot site instead of in specific ponds. LID sites generally have a lack of curbs, and use swales, rain gardens, narrower road widths, and crowned roads.

The first step in LID is to identify areas that affect hydrology. The second step is to minimize impacts – decide where you will impact when you build homes. The third step is to control stormwater at the source – do it at the lot level. The fourth step is storage, detention, and filtration.

LID sites benefit the environment cumulatively. In urban areas, there are many things that can be retrofitted to accomplish LID. Components of LID can be used anywhere.

The next step is to talk to engineers to see what will work in MA, as well as to try to get some money from EPA to study this technique, as well as to rewrite some regulations for incorporating these designs in plans.

Meeting adjourned.

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Meeting minutes approved 9/11/03